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## Alberta

AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND  
RURAL DEVELOPMENT

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

ENERGY

ENVIRONMENT

SUSTAINABLE RESOURCE  
DEVELOPMENT

## Al Sanderson takes the helm of the IRM Division

### And invites you to get in touch with him

When Al Sanderson moved to Alberta to take on the role of Director of Alberta Environment's Integrated Resource Management (IRM) Division, he brought along some 24 years of relevant experience. Sanderson worked with the B.C. government in a variety of roles including Regional Director for B.C. Environment's Omineca-Peace Region centred in Prince George. "We developed a number of land and resource management plans that engaged stakeholders in consensus decision-making models that worked quite well," said Sanderson.

In business for himself, Sanderson saw leading the IRM Division as an opportunity to come back to government in a province that stacks up well on IRM, when compared with other jurisdictions. "From what I've seen, having just been here a few weeks, Alberta is leading other jurisdictions in some areas of IRM, notably cumulative effects assessment. We're certainly near the forefront with lots of activity in the IRM planning arena and a very strong history in Alberta – a longer history than in most jurisdictions."

Sanderson also noted the strength of the IRM Division and Regional staff who bring lots of knowledge and good ideas to the table. "With that strength, we'll build on the senior executive interest around IRM."

With fewer than two weeks on the job, Sanderson had already received a clear message from deputy ministers that there's a desire to roll out regional strategies as quickly as possible. "We're looking at the two pilot regional strategies now, (the Northern East Slopes Sustainable Resource and Environmental Management Strategy and the Regional Sustainable Development Strategy for the Athabasca Oil Sands Area in the north-east of the province) to assess how they can be built on and used as models for other regions. Within the next year, we want to have agreement around what regional strategies will look like, and get strategies underway across the province. We want to have them completed within a couple of years, which I know is a tall order."

Sanderson says the greatest challenge will be getting people's attention. "There's a lot going on. We need to make the benefits of involvement in IRM clear. We must figure out what Albertans' priorities are around IRM and ensure we are focused on those priorities. I understand that government is looking to IRM as a way to help resolve some larger-picture issues."

The IRM Division will play a leadership and facilitative role in delivering IRM in the province, assisting in putting regional strategies together. Sanderson expects next steps will include developing a clear picture of expected outcomes and preparing a tool kit of ideas that regions would find useful in their planning processes. Delivery of individual planning processes will be a regional responsibility, he adds. "Coming from a regional background, I know that is the logical way to deliver."

**Continued on page 2**





*Al Sanderson*

#### Al Sanderson continued

As a participative leader, Sanderson is always open to new ideas and suggestions. Personally, his first priority is building a network. He's already visited many Edmonton and some regional offices. "I will get out to all regions over the next couple of months. I invite anyone interested in IRM, to get in touch so that down the road I'll know intuitively who to call when something comes up."

You can contact Al Sanderson by: phone at (780) 422-6656, or by email at [al.sanderson@gov.ab.ca](mailto:al.sanderson@gov.ab.ca)

## Northern Watershed Project

### Co-operative research effort ensures economic and environmental sustainability of Alberta's forests

Industry, government, the Alberta Conservation Association, and the Alberta Research Council are into the third year of a four-year research project to study the effects of disturbances on forest and fish resources in three watersheds in northwestern Alberta: Kakwa, Simonette, and Notikewin. They have just completed their third field season and are now collating and analyzing data.

"If we can quantify the ecological impacts of man-made disturbances, we can better manage Alberta's boreal forests. Our stakeholders have recognized the need for research in this area, and have committed political, financial and logistical support to the Northern Watershed Project."

*Garry Scrimgeour, ARC research scientist and project manager, Northern Watershed Project*

The \$1.4-million project is funded by:

- the Alberta Conservation Association,
- the Alberta Research Council,
- Alberta Environment and Alberta Sustainable Resource Development,
- Alberta-Pacific Forest Industries Inc.,
- TransCanada PipeLines Ltd.,
- Daishowa-Marubeni International Ltd., and
- Manning Diversified Forest Products Ltd.

The project consists of three components which will:

- develop and model harvest strategies for forested zones on the banks of rivers, led by Phil Lee, UofA Biological Sciences (780) 492-1297,
- provide a better understanding how fish are distributed throughout watersheds, led by Paul Hvenegaard, Alberta Conservation Association (780) 624-6566, and
- quantify the impact of man-made disturbances on fish communities, led by Garry Scrimgeour, Alberta Research Council (780) 632-8307.

The resulting knowledge will be transferred to the project funders and the communities in which they operate, and to the scientific community. It will help both industry and government address immediate concerns related to increasing development, and will contribute to the long-term planning and management of northern Alberta's forest and aquatic resources.

For more information on The Northern Watershed Project, please contact one of the project managers identified above or check out the Northern Watershed Newsletter at: [www.ab-conservation.com/projects/pdfs/Northern%20Watershed%20Newsletter%20Spring.pdf](http://www.ab-conservation.com/projects/pdfs/Northern%20Watershed%20Newsletter%20Spring.pdf)  
The next issue of the newsletter is due out in November 2001.



## Quotable Quote

*"With the planned legislation and a provincial authority responsible for siting and ongoing monitoring and enforcement of regulations, Albertans can feel confident that the livestock industry is practising good environmental stewardship and that our health and the air, water and soil are being protected. As well, the industry can count on a consistent, science-based decision-making process. Our goal is to support sustainable growth of the livestock industry, protect the environment, and meet the needs of our rural communities."*

*Deputy Premier and Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Development Shirley McClellan announcing that the Alberta government is assuming legislative responsibility for intensive livestock operations to ensure the future viability and sustainability of the province's livestock industry*

## Sustainable Agriculture Round-Up

### Agriculture Research Projects Make Significant Environmental Contributions

An independent research project evaluating the socio-economic impact of eight Alberta Research Council (ARC) projects shows that in addition to increased yields, reduced production costs and smaller losses from pests and diseases, there were also significant contributions made to environmental sustainability and rehabilitation.

One of the evaluated projects was Native Plants for Reclamation and Habitat Restoration. Through this project, superior native grassland varieties are now commercially available for use in land reclamation, habitat restoration, and native rangeland rehabilitation. They have the potential to reduce the chance for erosion and the growth and spread of weed species in disturbed sites. This project will help Albertans to better restore grasslands or rangelands, lessening the chance that the environment will be permanently damaged when industrial activities take place.

For more information, contact Dr. Paul Sharma by phone at (780) 632-8210 or by email at [psharma@arc.ab.ca](mailto:psharma@arc.ab.ca)

### Environmental Sustainability One of AARI's Research Priorities

The Alberta Agricultural Research Institute (AARI) is the primary agency in Alberta for funding, coordinating, and promoting strategic agricultural research initiatives and technology transfer in the agriculture and food sector. Environmental Sustainability is one of AARI's six key strategic research priorities. For more information, call AARI at (780) 427-1956 or check out their Web site at [www.aari.ab.ca](http://www.aari.ab.ca)

### AESA Program Aims to Make Agriculture more Environmentally Sustainable

The Alberta Environmentally Sustainable Agriculture (AESA) Program is designed to facilitate the development of new information and science; transfer new technology information into the hands of farmers, ranchers and processors; and monitor the impact of the agriculture industry on soil and water quality. The objective is to facilitate the continued development and adoption of management practices and technologies that make the agricultural production and processing industry more environmentally sustainable. According to AESA's Web site ([www.agric.gov.ab.ca/sustain/aesaprogram.html](http://www.agric.gov.ab.ca/sustain/aesaprogram.html)) "Sustainability considers social, economic and environmental factors. For

Alberta's agri-food industry, sustainability means that agricultural production and processing practices are economically viable and environmentally friendly and maintain or improve the quality of life, today and in the future."

The industry's sustainability is a fundamental focus of Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development, as emphasized in its mission statement: "We will enable the growth of a globally competitive, sustainable agriculture and food industry through essential policy, legislation, information and services."

## IRM Updates Partnership seeks sustainability of forests

Eight Alberta forestry companies have joined forces to create the Mixedwood Management Association (MWWMA).

Over the next three years they'll spend some \$700,000 to improve the management of mixed white spruce and poplar forests, and to sustain fibre, biodiversity, social, and ecological values.

**continued on page 4**



### MWMA continued

Their purpose is to increase understanding of the science and practice of mixedwood management in Alberta's boreal mixed-wood forests which constitute about 65 per cent of Alberta's productive forest land base.

Members include:

- Ainsworth Lumber Co. Ltd.,
- Alberta-Pacific Forest Industries Inc.,
- Daishowa-Marubeni International Ltd.,
- Millar Western Forest Products Ltd.,
- Tolko Industries Ltd.,
- Vanderwell Contractors (1971) Ltd.,
- Slave Lake Pulp/Alberta Plywood Ltd., and
- Weyerhaeuser Company Ltd.

Alberta Sustainable Resource Development's Land and Forest Service will support the association with advice and information in an effort to promote the scientific basis for the development of forest management plans.

Alberta Research Council's Forest Resources business unit will act as a coordinating body for MWMA, providing administrative, accounting, facilities, and project management to support the association in carrying out its day-to-day activities.

For further information, please contact Gitte Grover, Ph.D., Chair, MWMA, Alberta Pacific Forest Industries Ltd., by phone at (780) 525-8349.

## Regional Strategies

### Regional Strategies Review

Building upon current pilot strategies, the Alberta government is preparing to roll out regional strategies across the province. In order to learn from experience, a review of two existing regional strategy initiatives (i.e., the Regional Sustainable Development Strategy (RSDS) for the Athabasca Oil Sands Area and the Northern East Slopes (NES) Sustainable Resource and Environmental Management Strategy) is underway and is scheduled for completion in November, 2001. The review will:

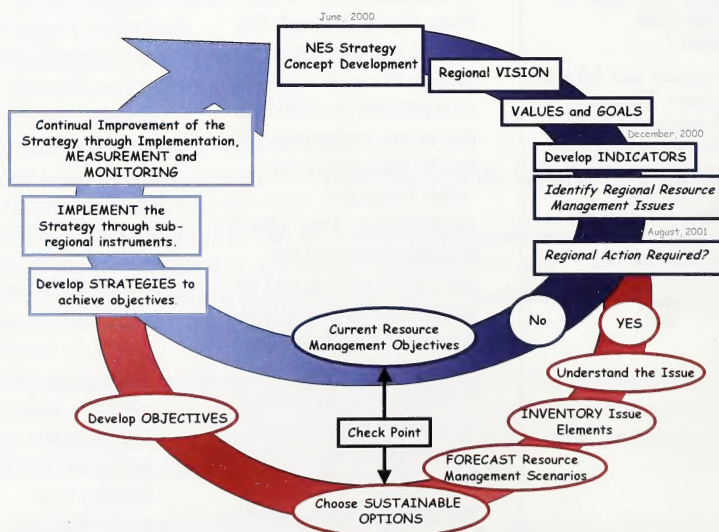
- collect information from participants and stakeholders about the products, outcomes, process and public involvement aspects of the two regional strategies,
- use relevant experience from these strategies to design future regional strategies elsewhere in the province, and
- recommend other design elements of a regional strategy program.

The results of the regional strategies review will be provided to a "blue-ribbon panel" of stakeholders and senior officials which will advise on appropriate and achievable strategy program design.

For more information about the Regional Strategies Review, contact Dave Belyea (780) 422-4492 or Harry Archibald (780) 422-4578 at Alberta Environment's IRM Division.

### Northern East Slopes Sustainable Resource and Environmental Management Strategy

At their June meeting in Hinton, the Regional Steering Group (RSG) identified 116 issues (concerns about a value). At their July meeting in Grande Cache, the group made a preliminary determination about which of these issues could be most effectively dealt with at the regional level. All of the regional issues were discussed at the July meeting or the August meeting in Hinton, as the group began the process of developing a shared understanding of the issues and their significance. This diagram illustrates the RSG's planning process:



## Editorial Board

We welcome your ideas in shaping the future of the newsletter. Please contact the Editorial Board, by email at [irm.newsletter@gov.ab.ca](mailto:irm.newsletter@gov.ab.ca) or by phone at (780) 427-4857, to make comments or suggestions. You can call toll-free by dialing 310-0000 and then entering the number.

Your input will help us to ensure that this newsletter disseminates information that reflects the interests and information needs of our readership. Please take a few moments to complete and return this evaluation. You can do this by:

- Faxing it to Nora Mortemore at (780) 421-0028
- Mailing it to Nora Mortemore, Public Involvement Advisor, Alberta Environment, 9th floor, Petroleum Plaza South Tower, 9915 - 108 Street, Edmonton, AB T5K 2G8

## Evaluation

1. How much of the October 2001 issue did you read?  
☐ none of it  
☐ skimmed some of it  
☐ skimmed all of it  
☐ skimmed some, read the rest  
☐ read it all
2. What one part of the newsletter did you find most informative?  
☐ the AI Sanderson article  
☐ the Northern Watershed Project article  
☐ the Sustainable Agriculture Round-Up  
☐ the Quotable Quote  
☐ the Partnership Seek Sustainability of Forests article  
☐ the Regional Strategies Updates
3. What one part of the newsletter did you find least informative?  
☐ the AI Sanderson article  
☐ the Northern Watershed Project article  
☐ the Sustainable Agriculture Round-Up  
☐ the Quotable Quote  
☐ the Partnership Seek Sustainability of Forests article  
☐ the Regional Strategies Updates
4. Overall, how satisfied are you that IRM Connections reflects your interests and information needs?  
☐ very dissatisfied  
☐ dissatisfied  
☐ neutral/unsure  
☐ satisfied  
☐ very satisfied
5. Would you like to be added to the e-mail distribution list for IRM Connections?  
☐ no  
☐ yes, my e-mail address is: \_\_\_\_\_
6. Other comments or suggestions?





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